

THE MUSICAL WORLD. 1844.

No. 34.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY AT NOON,
PRICE THREEPENCE;—STAMPED, FOURPENCE.

VOL. XIX.

THURSDAY, AUGUST, 22.

FAVANTI.

MISS EDWARDS—Italianized into Signora Favanti is, the most ill-used person living. We have hitherto abstained almost entirely from venturing an opinion about her, from reasons which must have been obvious to those who know what principles have uniformly swayed us. But now that the season has run itself out, there can be no harm in discussing her claims to public consideration, calmly and dispassionately.

Favanti's appearance at Her Majesty's Theatre, in the early part of the present season, was heralded by eulogies so hyperbolic, as to have excited public anticipation in a degree almost unprecedented. According to sundry of the Continental newspapers, she was, in voice and talent, something considerably beyond Malibran, and in person, at the very least, a Venus de Medicis. Her powers histrionic, moreover, were vaunted as superior to anything extant. All this rhodomontade was studiously and incessantly copied into the London Journals. At last, Signora Favanti was announced to appear in the *Cenerentola* of Rossini—a part which would not only fully display her extraordinary vocal aptitude, but which was capable of exhibiting her personal charms to bifold advantage;—first, in showing how her beauty could invest rags with interest;—second, in manifesting how

her eyes could outshine diamonds. Accordingly, on the evening named for her debut, a goodly assemblage of rank, and fashion, and wealth, and beauty, and *canaille*, and unfashion, and poverty, and ugliness (total:—a mob), flocked to the Italian Opera, bursting with excess of expectation. Up went the curtain!—A tall, well-looking, healthy girl (not a Venus de Medicis, certainly—but to *humanity* something even better), was discovered seated before the hearth—becoming her rags to admiration. “A fine creature!”—was the general exclamation;—but “Hark! she begins to sing.” The quaint and melancholy ditty which Rossini has first put into the mouth of Cenerentola, and which augurs better things of the opera than eventually come out of it, was rendered by the debutante with a quietude and purity which seemed already to promise a verification of the praises that “*Dame Rumour*” had sung so loudly in her favour. The slightest possible uncertainty of intonation, was, of course, laid to the score of nervousness. Nothing more natural—nothing more just. But, to make short a disagreeable tale, as the opera advanced, the qualifications of the singer fell from the top to the very bottom of the ladder, and at the conclusion, the blankness of thorough disappointment succeeded to the open-mouthed eagerness of anticipated delight. In two short hours the reputation of Favanti had evaporated into smoke! We shall say nothing of *claqueurs*—of a packed house—of interested friends, &c. &c. All these were noticeable—disagreeably so indeed. The critics of the principal morning papers were also noticeable (painfully so, to us) in

the most prominent boxes, shaking their heads, knitting their brows, and uttering, in looks, if not in words, expressions of chagrin and disappointment. Jenkins alone, who never knows how matters stand until he has asked the opinion of some one else, was observable in his accustomed attitude of unperturbed composure, with the regard of blank stupidity, which is his characteristic. Ever and anon he might be seen to approach this and that artist—ask his opinion, say “Exactly so—that is just what I was going to advance”—and return to his place. As for the *real public*—the indifferent mass—their dissatisfaction was so decided, that it vented itself in signs and noises of unequivocal signification. The artists, who understood the matter fully, laughed in their sleeves at the credulity of the public, and pitied the situation of the young lady. *Bref*:—At eight of the clock Favanti was the *greatest* singer in the world, and at half-past ten the *least*. What a fall was there! The disappointment was the keener, and the disapproval the more unreasonable, from the loud blasts which the trumpet of fame had blown into the ear of all England, for six months anterior to the untoward debut of poor Favanti. The public are always in extremes, and were now as unjust in their condemnations as before they were extravagant in their anticipations. However, a *more decided failure we never recollect*.

The next morning we rushed, before breakfast, to the office of the *Morning Post*, and bought a copy. The perusal of the *feuilleton* Jenkins threw us into convulsions; we were fairly solute in cachinnations.—“A Phoenix—an empress—a ninth wonder, (Jenkins

considers himself the eighth)—a miracle—a myth!" All this, and further, was Signora Favanti. More than ever turgid and rhapsodical—more than ever unintelligible and word-splitting, was the *feuilleton*;—in fact, Jenkins out-Jenkins'd himself in praise of the debutante, whose success he pronounced THE MOST TRIUMPHANT ON RECORD!—and all for an opera box and a supper! The other papers alas! were no less absurd in their unqualified praises. They were in a fix, to use an expressive phrase—and how to unfix themselves they knew not. The second appearance of Favanti entirely dispelled all public expectations of her excellence, and placed the newspapers in a dilemma of an unpleasant nature. The *Times* and the *Herald* wriggled ingeniously out of the labyrinth;—they managed to unimpale themselves from the dilemma's horns, and gradually softened down into truth and common sense. The *Chronicle* stuck to it "like a hero"—and bullied all the singers, actresses, and beauties that ever lived—from *Lais* down to *Grisi*—telling them that they were mere *fungi* in comparison with the English maiden. But this ordinarily starch critic is rarely awake after the overture to an opera, and an excuse may therein be found for his obstinate perseverance in humbugging the public. He had received his orders—he had slept in his box—and he performed his duty without flinching. A fine, dogged, imperturbable old critic—and no mistake! But the *Post* also stuck to it—though not "like a hero." Say rather—as a lizard sticks to a wall—sliming it the while. The English Dictionary was ransacked—the "French Dialogue" weeded—the "Rhymester's Manual" stripped—the "World of Synonyms" explored—for words, and phrases &c., to lavish on Favanti. But the artful Jenkins, all the while, was redeeming his character in another quarter. A Sunday newspaper has appeared lately under the cognomen of the "*Britannia*." Its contents are made up from the bottle-rinsings of the literary journals—the vulgarisms of *Fraser's tory rhapsodies*—and the most

choice and spicy Police Reports. Who so fit a critic for this hebdomadal hodge-podge as Jenkins? None but himself can be himself, and Jenkins was accordingly hired. Now we need scarcely say that the directors of Her Majesty's Theatre never once thought of according the privilege of free entrance to the editors of such a paper as the *Britannia*. The result of which neglect, however, was an order from the authorities of the journal, permitting Jenkins to speak the truth about Favanti—in short, to say what he pleased—in short, to proceed the absolute *porcus*. This suited Jenkins to a T—for he is never so happy, as when permitted to exercise his vocabulary of scurrility. His collection of abusive epithets and phrases is fully as extensive as his catalogue of laudatory inflations—and this was emptied out pell-mell on the head of the devoted Favanti. Having perused the articles in the *Atlas* and *Athenæum*, the only two journals which criticised the debutante in becoming terms—the only two journals independent of the persuasive influence of an opera box *ad libitum*—having swallowed these articles, Jenkins, fully armed with the certainty of not committing himself, launched his wordy avalanche with ten-fold virulence—belaboured himself in the *Post*—vituperated himself as a humbug—ate his own words with infinite relish—and hit out, right and left, at *Times*, *Chronicle*, and *Herald*, condemning all three as partial and hired reviewers. This, from Jenkins, was admirable. The *Times* and *Herald* treated his diatribes with silent contempt. The *Chronicle* was fast asleep all Sunday, and so did not read them. And thus was poor Favanti made an innocent victim to the over estimation of zealous friends, and the bitterness of unprincipled foes!

But, we say it without reserve, there is much of promise in Favanti. She has a splendid voice, both in regard to quality and compass. She has abundant spirit—and the evident wish to effect what she lacks the skill to attain. She has unmistakable enthusiasm—the germ of future

greatness. She has a commanding figure—a pleasing form—a charming smile. She has, moreover, youth, and health, and strength. What more does she want? What more than these qualifications, properly employed, is required to make eventually a perfect artist? We recollect Miss Edwards some years ago, at the Haymarket, in the self-same character of Cenerentola—we recollect her at the Academy Concerts about the same period. We always admired her voice—her energy—her personal attractions—and we do not hesitate to say, that she knew as much, and sang as well, then, as now—if not, indeed, more and better. This demonstrates to us, the truth of an opinion which we have long entertained, viz.—that vocal instruction in Italy, at the present day, is all moonshine. There is not a great master of singing from one end of the country to the other. And as for music—the enthusiasm created by such trash as the operas of Verdi, and the brothers Ricci (incomparable pair!) plainly manifests the degraded condition of the art, and the miserable depravity of the public taste. Miss Bassano had not been six weeks in Italy before she felt deeply the loss of her excellent friend and instructor, Crivelli—and Miss Birch is capable of teaching the directors of all the conservatorios in a row. Why, then, did these vocalists betake themselves to the once land of song and now of barrel organ tunes? We cannot pretend to say—but certainly not for musical instruction. We are quite convinced that Italy has ruined Favanti—as it nearly ruined Clara Novello—and, as it would have ruined, but for her natural genius, Miss Adelaide Kemble—now Mrs. Sartoris. (As it was, the taste of the last-named accomplished vocalist suffered terribly, from her long sojourn in Italy—and this in spite of her own better impulses.) Let us hope that Miss Birch and Miss Bassano may come out of the fire unscathed.

But these things have only relatively to do with Favanti. We have the most

friendly disposition towards this young lady. We would fain see her reach the eminence for which credit was given her ere she was put to the proof. A master she *must* have, if she would save herself from a future without glory, without gain. She has so many faults, that we should not know where to begin—coveted we the responsibility of her advisers. But, uncoveting that distinction, we are satisfied with telling her, that however gifted she may be in voice and person, however conscious she may be of the right and proper feeling, however enthusiastic she may be in her reverence of art—a total lack of *mechanical* power, a thorough unacquaintance with the method and principles of vocalization, and an invariable and painful uncertainty of intonation (the inevitable consequence of want of method), must *for ever* prevent her attaining even a moderate position in her calling. Moreover, the older she grows, untaught and unadmonished, the more confirmed will she become in her mistakes—and, *young though she be*, the day must come when she will find herself *too old to learn*. Ten years pass over like a summer cloud—and, from the age of twenty to that of thirty, the golden, nay, the *priceless* ten years of the life of a female artist—if good principles be not rooted in the soil, there is no further hope of them. At thirty, even man has ceased to learn new things—the springiness, the hope, the aspiration, the thirst for novelty, of early life, *are gone*;—how much more so is this true in woman—who, blooming earlier, withers earlier than her companion! We mean this in a friendly spirit, and it must not be otherwise interpreted, by Favanti, or her zealous friends. We shall watch her progress with real interest, for the sake of our country and our art. It is certain that Favanti possesses more than three-fold the *natural gifts* of any English vocalist of the present day; in quality and range of voice none can compare with her—in personal appearance, few, if any. She has it in her grasp to be the *QUEEN* of them. How painful to regard the alternative, of

being the meanest of them all! Courage, young lady! Buckle up your energy—and to it, like a heroine—we promise you a helping hand.

Q.

THE ITALIAN OPERA.

On Thursday we paid a visit (rare occurrence!) to Her Majesty's Theatre. We are frequently asked why we so seldom notice this establishment—and our answer invariably is, that we do not reckon it within the pale of things musical. The reason must be obvious to any true lover of the art. What care we for a grand orchestra, with the flourishes of Signor Costa to boot, apart from its being a means of communicating to us the treasures of the great dramatic composers?—Not one fig! We should attend the opera regularly twice a week, and report thereon, were any works performed worth the trouble of sitting out. But it is not in us to keep awake during the "*chef d'œuvres*" (!) of Bellini and Donizetti, however well interpreted by the artists employed. We cannot endure their eternity of quadrille tunes—still less their noisy, scratchy, instrumentation—and least of all their abominable carelessness of all dramatic propriety. To listen to a gentleman or lady, supposed to be in the agonies of death, shouting with preposterous mock gravity a morbid waltz tune, is too much for our nerves. We relish a dramatic or operatic representation, when the fitness of the scenic and musical adjuncts allows us to weep with the serious and laugh with the comic situations—not when truth and common sense force us into the precise opposite. We have endeavoured strenuously to retain our gravity during the last scenes of the *Lucia* and *Lucrezia*—but the absurd want of all character in the music moves us to risibility in spite of our efforts to the contrary. We like the ballet well enough, when such graceful creatures as Carlotta Grisi, and Cerito help us to its appreciation—but the perfection of a ballet by no means makes up for the worst than imperfection of what should be (and professedly is) the most important feature in the performance at Her Majesty's Italian Opera. However, *Don Giovanni* never fails to attract us to the Haymarket, and as a matter of course we attended the representation on Thursday night. But what was our disappointment at finding the masterpiece of Mozart altogether misunderstood, both by the vocal and instrumental forces? What was our disgust at finding the buffoonery of a popular vocalist applauded "to the echo"—even when it marred the effect, and strangled the meaning, of the divinely intellectual inspirations of Mozart. It may be all well enough for the great *buffo*(on)—"*notre père à nous tous*," as Salvi denominates him—to exercise his *humor* on the indifferent rubbish of his own compatriots of these days, but we hold it worse than irreverence in him to make the music of the great German master a medium for the silliest antics, the most trivial mummery that ever drew plaudits from the gallery of a minor theatre. What *music* can an artist have in his soul, who courts vulgar laughter, in the very midst of that tremendously impressive scene, which winds up the most wonderful of all operas? And yet "*Notre père à nous tous*," instead of aiding the awful solemnity of the scene by appropriate acting—(and no one knows better *how*)—turns it into the veriest rhodomontade, by tricks and gestures that we should only expect from a mountebank. We feel that we take upon ourselves a great responsibility in thus censuring so deservedly eminent, and so unprecedentedly popular an artist, but, before the genius of Mozart the consequence of all the singers upon earth sinks into utter insignificance. Lablache is the more to be blamed for this

lamentable want of respect towards the king of operatic composers, since in most of the previous scenes of the opera his acting and singing are beyond all praise. We can tell him sincerely that the public who go to listen to *Don Giovanni* are quite another public than that which listlessly chatters, night after night, with a vacancy suited to the best carpeted drawing-room, through the meagre extravagancies of the generality of modern Italian operas;—and that this public—our public, the Musical Public—disapproves of such unwarrantable liberties with the music of Mozart. But this is not all. Of all the *Don Giovanni's* we can call to mind, we do not recollect one so thoroughly bad as Signor Fornasari. He neither understands the music nor the character. We have ever held him the most ridiculously overrated of the Italians. His vocalization lacks all the essentials of excellence. His style is coarse and vulgar—his execution clumsy and uncertain—not the least grace or invention is to be noted in his *floriture*—not a vestige of propriety in his, so-called expression. He should confine himself to such operas as *Belisario*, where absolute rant may easily pass for passion, and common-place exaggeration for energy; but in *Don Giovanni* something more is required than obstreperous bawling, and inflation of gesture. Grisi, certainly in a great degree makes up for the faults of her comrades. Her Donna Anna is a majestic and passionate conception, developed with admirable skill. Persiani, though occasionally false in intonation, renders the part of Zerlina with an arch and countrified prettiness, quite in character. But when we recall poor Malibran—alas! we weep to think of what used to be and is not! This, however, is in the vein of Grandpapa, and not in our usual manner of talking—but we cannot help it, now and then. Poor Favanti! whom the cruel flattery of the hyperbolic and fawning Jenkins (in return for his nightly boxes) has almost annihilated, sang fearfully out of tune. We regret this. Our delight would have been sincere to have acknowledged a really gifted English artist—but such a sacrifice of natural qualifications, far beyond mediocrity, we never recollect. Jenkins, in rendering *élèves* for *loges*, has been the greatest enemy to this unfortunate young lady; but the worst of it is—in another of his organs, the *Britannia*, (which being un-boxed confers not critical Christmas-boxes,) he is the most virulent and obstinate of poor Favanti's castigators! Unparalleled meanness! Barfedaced want of principle! We, however, are better inclined towards Favanti than most of our cotemporaries, who have been so gracefully eating their own words, for the last two months. She has a superb voice, and does not lack energy. Let her retire awhile to her *studio*. Let her make the best, under Crivelli or some good master, of the gift which nature has so kindly bestowed upon her—and with a fine person in her favour, she may yet succeed, and defy the malignity of Jenkins.

Besides the derelictions of the vocalists, we have to discommend the frequent misconceptions of Signor Costa, "pupil of the great Tritto," who, mangle that illustrious man's instructions, appears to have small ability to comprehend the meaning of Mozart. Not in one, two, or three, but in twenty instances at least, does Signor Michael Costa, "pupil of the great Tritto," entirely mistake the *times* of the pieces. Moreover, he, the conductor, allows the transposition of certain songs and the omission of others. Moreover, he, the conductor, has either added himself, or authorized another to add, or at least allows to be played as added, a villainous noise of trombones, &c. in the overture, which would have made the great Mozart, had he heard it, turn a somerset. What infamously bad taste is there in this interpolation of cacophonous blasts of brass instruments—as much out of place, and out of character as a dromedary at a tea party. Is it, we would ask, absolutely impracticable to give one of

Mozart's operas precisely as he intended it? What is there so transcendently erudite in the conductors, vocalists, and fiddlers of the present day, that they should dare to interfere with the design of so wonderfully gifted a composer? We have really no patience with this spirit of *improving* the master-pieces of men of genius—who being dead, have nothing to say in defence of their original intentions. *Israel in Egypt* and the *Messiah* must needs be *improved* at Exeter Hall, by interpolations, omissions, transpositions, alterations, and what not. And so, to keep up the character of the times, *Don Giovanni* must be mauled about, at the opera, in similar fashion. We never will consent to such impious intermeddling. We never will be a party to the cutting and slashing of great works of art, by persons utterly incompetent to handle them. It will be said that we are hard upon Signor Costa, "pupil of the great Tritto." No such thing. Signor Costa is a pupil worthy of his wonderfully unknown master. He is a musician of ability—and the *impresario* entrusts him with unlimited power in his department—having the entirest confidence in his judgment and acquirements, and himself knowing nothing at all of the matter. This is as it should be. But why does not Signor Costa, if the "great Tritto" have infused any music into him, make better use of the authority consigned to him? Flattered by the turgid rhodomontade of Jenkins, doubtless Signor Costa thinks himself a person of immense consequence; and so he enters the orchestra, and says "Hush"—and flourishes a gilt baton, with gyrations of infinite diversity and grace—and fancies that he has done all that is required of him—and exclaims "I am Costa, pupil of the great Tritto,"—and, looking upon himself as something beyond a Napoleon, goes to bed on a champagne supper. But we tell Signor Costa that, as conductor of Her Majesty's Italian orchestra, at Her Majesty's very Italian Opera, he has other and more important duties to perform than the mere flourishing of a stick about his ears. As a musician, he should be tender of the reputation of musicians, and should keep a sharp eye on the vocalists, libretto-makers, and other exceedingly independent but vastly over-rated personages.

Speaking of the opera brings to our mind the absolutely wicked profuseness with which money is lavished on the Italian singers. All vocalists are overpaid—if they be at all popular—in comparison with their fellow-artists in the instrumental line, whose labour and acquirements are necessarily as ten to one—and whose pay is as one to a hundred. But the Italian vocalists are ludicrously over-estimated, and shamefully over-rewarded. Only think—reader—only think of a singer like Signor Fornasari, whose abilities do not soar much beyond those of the renowned Paul Bedford—only think of this man receiving *two thousand five hundred pounds* of English money, for singing—often badly, always indifferently—throughout the better half of the opera season! It is really monstrous! We will eschew the old, but honest, clap-trap of "Think of the many who are starving, &c." (leaving that to be elaborated, for the thousandth time, by Mr. Walter of the *Times*, in his essays about himself and the poor laws)—we will eschew this venerable and ancient allusion—but we must protest that it is against all reason—against all justice—against all policy, thus to cram guineas down the throats of half a dozen semi-educated musical artists—who, if they received in a lump one thousand pounds for their whole party, would be amply remunerated for their amount of talent. Of all the egregious follies of fashion, this preposterous rewarding of singers is the most culpable and contemptible. Why, Signor Fornasari is as well paid as some of our chiefest statesmen, and for little or no labour to boot! We never object to a man receiving his quota for the sweat of his brow. And so if Monsieur Chatouille-pied amass, in a year, two thousand pounds, for teaching the Polka at a

guinea a lesson, we complain not, since he must work like a dancing master for his money. Many is the caper he must have cut, many the caper he must have carved (*carved*—excuse the pun) to have obtained this sum, and for the pounds of flesh that have dissolved away from him, he merits pounds of gold as a makeshift. Monsieur Chatouille-pied, then, deserves his pay. But not so the singers. Nothing in the world is easier than to sing indifferently—say, *par exemple*, as nine vocalists out of ten, if you are gifted with a voice; no vocation needs so small a share of intellect, and so small a share of labour, as that of the ordinary vocalist. And yet the most popular of them get paid as ministers of state, and look down contemptuously on their incontestable superiors, in all respects, except lungs, the instrumental artists! A favourite singer makes a fortune before the greatest musical composer in the world can amass a pittance! In the case of the Italian artists, it is the more unreasonable, since all we get for our English money is scurrilous abuse. The Italians avow that they cannot bear England or the English—in fact, nothing English but English gold (of which, by the way, they are immoderately fond). They detest English manners, English wines, English boots, English food, English fogs, English sunshine, English every thing—but, as we have said before, English money. Poor things!—they ought indeed to be well paid for the temporary endurance of such an atmosphere and such a population! It is dreadful to contemplate the sufferings they undergo! However, as soon as they get back to Paris, in the month of October, they are once more themselves. They are then in the true *region of artists*, far away from *blunt* (characteristic word!) shop-keeping England. They can eat there—poor things!—drink and sleep also—poor things!—and do many other things (poor things!), openly, which in England can only be effected *sub rosa*—because, with the exception of the aristocracy, no class of society in this country can tolerate an avowed contempt of morals, and a laxity in social ties—even in Italian singers. But in Paris—dear Paris! (where we don't earn so much money), we can have fifty times as much pleasure—can we not, comrades?—as in nasty, dirty, naughty London! Yes—reader—the Italian singers abuse and ridicule us—and take our money. The Italian singers laugh at and humbug us—and take our money. The Italian singers despise and hate us—and take our money. And thus the world wags! Oh that we were but Italian singers!—how many whitebait dinners would we not have at Greenwich during the season—at the expense of the heavy, stupid, unartist-like English dolts!

And yet, strange to relate—reader—there is more feeling for art—more knowledge of art—more genius for art—more appreciation of art in stupid England, than throughout Europe elsewhere;—and what is more, there are more *fine voices*. But we want "the great Tritto" to come and instruct us; Crivelli already has his hands full. As heartily as we despise charlatanism and insincerity—so heartily do we despise the ITALIAN SINGERS—the most over-estimated—over-paid—self-sufficient, and ungrateful set of artists in existence.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

PEDDLETOWN, DORSET, Aug. 16, 1844.

SIR,—I am a retired professor of music (not a very retiring profession you'll say) settled down in this snug little village in Dorsetshire, one of your very earliest subscribers; and between the "delights of Angling," and the delight afforded me by the perusal of your entertaining journal, with some other recreative avocations I manage to while away

the time in my "downhill of life" very agreeably. Indeed the interest I take in the passing musical events of the day as chronicled in your miscellany of what is going forward in the sphere in which I heretofore have moved, makes me look out for the "*Musical World*" as regularly on the morning after publication as I anticipate the "Sabbath bell" on the day of rest. Indeed I often make it my companion to the fishing rod, and when the finny tribe are indolent, I take a *dip* into that to see what "odd fish" are floating in its columns. Lately, in casting my eye over its pages, I have been greatly puzzled by the promineny of capital letters in the middle of articles, forming the name of Jenkins.

This has so continually floated in my imagination that I have caught myself several times when a breeze upon the water has agitated my float, and I have drawn up the line, expecting to realise the fruits of a nibble, and found myself so disappointed that I have dropped the rod hastily, exclaiming "Jenkins again!" So that you see Mr. Editor, this "Jenkins" has ruffled the quietude of my literary enjoyments, as well as the calm of my piscatory pursuits. However, as I am not fond of being thwarted in one research or the other, and have no taste for "fishing in troubled water," or allowing Dr. Johnson's definition to be realized in my person, I determined to hunt this Jack (Jenkins) I mean, till I should find out his lurking place. Accordingly having occasion to visit the metropolis recently, I made it my business to *bait* for this nibbler; and I think I have managed to "fish him out" if I can find the memorandums I made at the time. Oh, here they are; but being made in pencil I fear the friction of the journey has somewhat obliterated or impaired their distinctness. I can, however, remember much of what I gathered; and my information was obtained from "A 1" in the "Corner," whence Jenkins' Concerts are brought out. Ah! Mr. Editor, I fear I am at fault at last—but (having the pencil!) the name ends with—as near as I can make it out—"on—son, or eison" and commences with an H— or G—the top of the letter, owing to the paper being folded across the line, being illegible as to the first syllable or syllables. I can indistinctly make out, too, a word ending in something like "• • • • • mond" but whether christian or surname, I am not confident. However that I may not run my head against a "Post" *"l'U Et'ève"* • (have) you to guess the remainder, assuring you that all my efforts shall be made to trace the "Conduit" to the brook—

And drop my line in every nook,
Till barb'd upon the bank this Pike,
Yclep'd "*Jenkins*," tho' 'a wryon' strike,
So shall my patience prove victorious.

Your constant reader,

PISCATORIUS.

THE YORK ORGAN.

To the Editor of the "*Musical World*."

SIR.—Perceiving, by your last number, a favourable notice of the pamphlet just issued respecting the York organ, I cannot refrain cautioning you against its assertions. Having lately travelled a considerable distance to hear it, in the anticipation of a great treat, I confess to have been completely disappointed. It seems that not only was the organ originally built on an absurd principle, artistically speaking, but that since the builder left it, the organist, discovering the deficiency, engaged a very incompetent country builder to reconstruct the whole instrument, by transposing the pipes four or five notes upwards, from an erroneous idea of obtaining more tone. The scale being now too large, the result is the worst effect conceivable. There

* Qy. L'Elève—Printer's Devil.

is neither power, brilliancy, or quality of any kind. The pedal organ is certainly the best portion, but for so huge and vast an instrument, it may be considered in the ensemble a total failure; and though larger than the Birmingham organ, it is inferior in point of effect. I must apologize for thus intruding on your notice, but having read the Doctor's pamphlet, and heard his organ, the one a collection of absurdity and bombast, the latter a lasting monument of folly, I am induced, if possible to check the dissemination of assertions which no person of sense, or knowledge of organ building could coincide with.

I am, Sir,
Your very obedient servant,
A COUNTRY ORGANIST.

August 17, 1844.

REVIEWS.

"The Barefooted Friar"—Bass Song—
E. J. LODER. (Z. T. Purday.)

THIS is beyond the calibre of ordinary songs. It is a vigorous and characteristic musical rendering of some admirable verses of Scott. Its character is markedly sequential, and the melody and harmony equally manifest a love of (and an acquaintance with) the good old English masters—Purcell and Arne in particular. The opening symphony should be shorn of the first bar, to make it rhythmical. The chord of B flat in the second bar of the song, is bold and happy. The unisonic passage, in A minor, descriptive of the "arm chair," and "plum porridge," is quaint and effective—and the vocal *trait* on the word "Friar," and thence to the end of the verse, excellently conceived, and pointedly put. The composer of this song must have been often up to his eyes in good cheer, so well discoursed he musically of "pasty made hot"—of "brown ale"—and of a "black pot"—to say nothing of the "plum porridge" of which elsewhere we have hinted something. Verily, this song has given us an appetite—and, were it not bed-time, we would fain ring for supper;—but, having once supped already, we must stay our appetite till the morning, with fair promises of new laid eggs and bacon. We perceive the name of Herr Staudigl affixed to this song—but he has never sung it to our knowledge. Better than he, however, could no one sing it—unless the composer;—and we counsel the publisher to place it under his nose without delay. The very smell of it will put him in good spirits. Let Herr Staudigl be stayed with flagons and comforted with apples—let him be tempted with good cheer—let him be ministered unto fatly—and the song will be the gainer. It is an oily romaunt—of a verity it perspireth porridge.

Queen of the Night—serenade.—J. COHAN.
(Ransford).

Mr. Cohan does not confine himself to

a variation of Polkas. He essays, with equal zeal, the field of vocal music—and not a wit less successfully. The present serenade is not a serenade with a mere accompaniment of ding-dong, and an end of it. It is a melody which trippeth, married to a pianoforte accompaniment which skippeth. In the manufacture of this accompaniment, Mr. Cohan has kept an eye upon himself. He has reasoned with himself thus:—"Most probably I shall accompany this serenade in person—and in such case I will manifest that a singer may at least be rivalled by a ready pianist. I like not your drum-drum of common chords." And Mr. Cohan has well reasoned, and the present accompaniment is the bantling of his thus reasoning. We are a shade reminded by the way, in devouring this serenade with the eagerness with which necessarily we devour a new work of Cohan, of the serenade in "Don Juan," with an obliged fiddle;—but to be reminded of a good thing is always pleasant—and this also Mr. Cohan has doubtless borne in his eye. The verses are by a poet hight Mingaud, and embody zealously the novel argument of a lover comparing his mistress to the moon, and giving the preference to his mistress. The only difficulty is to know whether "the lady" be absent or present, both of which are somewhat obscurely intimated—the latter in the first, and the former in the last verse. Perhaps, however, the poet was moonstruck at the time.

Provincial.

BRIGHTON.

From our own Correspondent.

DEAR WORLD.—This "queen of watering places" is daily improving in the cultivation of good music. Brighton is, however, essentially a *gay* town, and I suspect it contains more admirers of Jullien and Labitsky than of Handel and Mozart. However, I doubt not that a very great alteration will, ere long, take place, and a healthier taste be inculcated. I am already pleased to observe the unusual spirit with which our musical season has commenced. The first concert of note during the present season took place at the Town Hall, on Friday morning last. The principal attraction was the violin playing of Signor Sivi. To criticise his performance would be superfluous, as every reader of the *Musical World* is well acquainted with his talents, nor am I in a condition to venture an opinion as to his comparative merits in respect to his two great rivals, since neither Ernst nor Joachim have paid Brighton a visit. That Sivi is a first rate violinist cannot be denied; but, whether he merits the distinction of being named the "first violinist in the world," is a matter of considerable doubt. Public opinions are various on the matter. The concert was fashionably attended, Sivi being honoured by the special patronage of royalty; therefore he *must* be a great performer, because he is fashionable—and it would be very unfashionable in fashionable people to neglect hearing so fashionable an artist. Not that two-thirds of the audience can appreciate what he effects on the instrument—but it is indispensable to be present at Sivi's concert, because Sivi had the honour of playing

before the Queen and the royal family; hence a reputation is almost obtained by the sphere in which an artist moves. This reminds me of the different receptions of Rossini and Weber, when they visited England. Rossini was patronized by royalty, and, as a matter of course, by the leading aristocracy of England. Weber was received with coolness, and remained in comparative obscurity. He was unnoticed by the nobility, and only welcomed by musicians—men of his own walk in life. But to return to Sivi. He performed *La Clochette* of Paganini, a duet with Mr. Laveno, and the *Carnaval de Venise*. The audience appeared highly delighted, and zealously applauded him throughout. This contrasts remarkably with his reception here last season, at our theatre, when the Sivi-mania was at its height, when he was vaunted as "superior" to Paganini. He then came forward to play his solo (the *Carnaval*), and was literally compelled to leave the stage before he had completed it, on account of the noisy disapprobation of a portion of the audience. This is a fair step from the sublime to the ridiculous. Sivi had played the same piece a short time previous, before *her Majesty*, and a most fashionable audience, by special desire, and was extolled to the skies, while here he was unwarrantably and coarsely insulted. However, our little Italian may solace himself with the old saw—"If ignorance is bliss 'twere folly to be wise." Among the vocalists at the concert we recognized our late excellent and amiable townswoman, Miss Emma Lucombe, who has wonderfully improved since I last heard her. In conjunction with Miss Sara Flower, a charming singer, she gave the duet, "Two merry Gypsies are we," so well, as to obtain an unanimous encore. This is one of the most popular and catching of the vocal compositions of Mr. Macfarren, and seldom fails to meet with a call for repetition. The two young ladies sang other pieces very cleverly. Mrs. C. Harper and Signor Inchindi were also highly successful. Miss D'Egville, our resident pianist, executed a fantasia of Thalberg's very well, and was warmly applauded. Mr. Laveno was the conductor; and the concert, on the whole, gave considerable satisfaction. In addition to other musical announcements, I perceive that Mr. Wilson will give two of his popular entertainments on the 30th and 31st of this month. You shall hear again shortly.—Your's,

P.

Brighton, August 19, 1844.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HERR ADOLPH GOLLMICK.—This artist gave a *soirée musicale*, last night at Pape's pianoforte rooms. Herr Gollmick is a violinist and pianist, and performed on the violin, a solo by Ghys and a fantasia by himself. On the pianoforte he gave two of Henselt's studies, and an *andante* by Döhler. He was rewarded with the well merited approval of his friends. The vocal music was sustained by Miss Sabilla Novello, Miss Dolby, and two amateurs. The two ladies sang each an Italian *cavatina*, each a Britannie ballad, and an Italian *duo* together;—the amateurs, more aspiring, confined themselves to the compositions of German masters, including a pleasing song by Herr Gollmick among the number. M. Jules de Glimes conducted the concert with ability. The room was well filled. The pianoforte was an *eight octave*, of new construction, the manufacture of Mr. Pape—apparently an excellent instrument.

GLUCK'S GRAVE.—The great composer, Christoph Gluck, was born in Bohemia, about 1712. After gaining much renown in Germany and Italy, he was invited, in 1745, by Lord Middlesex, to come to London to compose for the Italian opera, which was under his Lordship's direction at that time; but, in consequence of the breaking out of the rebellion, all foreigners were regarded as dangerous to the state, and the opera was shut up by order of the Lord Chamberlain; but it was soon re-opened and Gluck composed an opera, in compliment to the Duke of Cumberland; but he was by no means successful, so he returned to Italy, and after remaining there for some time he went to Vienna, where he met with a poet of congenial mind, of the name of Calzabigi, who wrote for him the operas of *Orfeo*, *Alceste*, and *Armida*, which he set to music in a manner that has immortalised his name as a dramatic composer. After passing several glorious years in Italy, &c., Gluck arrived in Paris, and, having mastered the French language, he composed several operas for the theatre in the French capital, and he brought out *Alceste* in 1776, which caused such a revolution in French music, that war was declared against him by the composers of that country. Pamphlets and epigrams innumerable were launched forth by different parties, some for Gluck and others for Piccini, who had just arrived from Naples, and this was carried on for some years, until at length it was resolved to terminate all dissensions by dividing the palm between them. Gluck returned to Vienna in 1779, the Parisians having erected a statue to his honour in the saloon of the opera. In 1784, he was rendered incapable of writing by a paralytic stroke, under the effect of which he lingered till the 15th of November, 1787, when he died, aged 75, leaving behind him a fortune of nearly 30,000*l.*, the produce of his talents and industry. Dr. Burney said, "Gluck has been denominated the Michael Angelo of his art; he has founded a school of music as that painter did of painting, and he is as happy in portraying difficult situations of the mind as that painter was of the body. We have been induced to give this brief sketch of Gluck in consequence of seeing the following paragraph in *Galignani's Journal* lately:—

"**GLUCK'S GRAVE.**—The attempts to discover the grave of Mozart have not succeeded; but the searches made for it have disclosed that of Gluck, which has been found in the cemetery of Watzleinsdorf, at Vienna. It is covered by a slab, now broken in the middle, and obscured with moss, behind a splendid monument erected to the memory of a rich banker. It bears the following modest inscription:—'Here lies an honest German, a good Christian, and a faithful husband. Christophe Chevalier de Gluck, Master of the Art of Music. He died on the 15th of November, 1787.'"

MISS CLARA SEYTON'S LECTURES.—As an exponent of the genius of English comedy, this young lady decidedly takes a very exalted place. Her lectures on this branch of the drama of our country, lately delivered at the Princess's Concert Room, were successful, not only from the wide field over which they extend, but also from the fertility of her illustrations, and the justice of her criticisms. Miss Seyton's delivery is felicitous, her voice musical, and her elocution distinguished for propriety and expression. On her late appearance at Crosby Hall, her success was, if possible, more brilliant than at the Princess's Theatre. We perceive that she has announced a new lecture on English comic opera, to be delivered in the same

place on the 10th of September, under the patronage of several members of the royal family, and the civic authorities.—*Sunday Times*.

MASTER L. SILBERBERG.—The concert of this talented young violinist took place on Thursday evening, at Zeitter's pianoforte rooms, and was well attended. The performances of the *beneficiaire* excited general admiration. He played De Beriot's "Sixth air with variations," a *fantasia* by Artot, and a duet of De Beriot and Osborne, in which he was cleverly supported by Miss Dinah Farmer. He thus showed himself at home in different schools. With study and perseverance we have no doubt that the future energies of Master Silberberg will justify the high opinion entertained of his ability by the celebrated Ernst. Several high standing professors have given the young violinist written testimonials of their estimate of his talents, from which we hope to be able to give some extracts in a future number. Master Silberberg was assisted by the following artists:—Don J. M. Ciebra, and Don R. A. de Ciebra, (guitar—encored in a duet)—Miss Dinah Farmer (pianoforte—much applauded in a *solo* on airs from *Norma*)—Mr. C. Sonnenberg, (clarinet)—and Miss Van Millingen, Mrs. Aveling Smith, Mr. Handel Gear, and Herr Kroff—vocalists—Mr. Mühlenfeldt was the conductor.

NORWICH.—Mr. Fish has announced two concerts here for the morning and evening of to-morrow, the 23rd inst. The performers engaged are Sivi, Inchindi, Miss Sarah Flower, Miss Emma Lucombe, and Mrs. C. Harper. Mr. Lavenu will preside at the piano, and Mr. Bexfield will play a chorus in the morning, and a tempest in the evening, on the organ. The "*Bohemian Girl*" has travelled this way. It has been produced with great success, though the audiences have not been overflowing. The papers are loud in their praises of the opera and the singers. Stretton and Harrison came in for a good share of eulogy—and the following extract from the "*Norfolk Chronicle*" will give some notion of the opinions here entertained of the charming Miss Rainforth:—

"Miss Rainforth captivated alike by her bewitching strains, and by the artlessness of her style of acting, which is easy, natural, and fraught with genuine feeling; whilst the charm of her voice and her beautiful execution of the music allotted to her, nightly call forth the plaudits of warm admiration."

The *Somnambula* has also been performed, and the same journal thus registers its notion of the vocalists:—

"The singing and acting of Mr. Harrison rendered his personation of *Elvino* one of the best we have seen; Mr. Stretton, in the Count, sang with equal spirit and good taste; and Miss Rainforth, though she wants the physical energy and spark-

ling execution of Mrs. Wood, charmed all ears by the magic of her sweet voice; whilst she pleased and interested by the simple grace and unaffected pathos of her acting. The parts of *Alessio* and *Liza* were sustained with much propriety by Mr. Gomersall and Miss Norman."

The *Beggar's Opera* has been among the performances. Stretton took the *Mountain Sylph* for his benefit. Harrison, the *Bohemian Girl* for his. Miss Rainforth (on Saturday) selected *Norma*, and *No song no supper*, for hers, and attracted the fullest audience. Of the chorus and band at the theatre, the same journal says:—

"During the week, the chorus and band have been greatly reinforced; several amateurs kindly giving their assistance in the latter. The manner in which it was led by Mr. C. F. Hall, so quietly, and yet so effectively, has contributed greatly to the musical success of the operas."

Since this the *Bohemian* party have paid a visit to Yarmouth, with what success we have not yet heard.

OLLA PODRIDA.—MR. BRAHAM is to appear at the City of London Theatre for one night only (Saturday, August 24th), the performances being for a benefit, in aid of the funds for assisting the Jewish poor. Mr. Braham, besides playing *Tom Tug*, will sing "*Molly Bawn*," and "*The Death of Nelson*;" we think no other inducement need be offered to cause the theatre to be crammed.—**MOZART.**—A son of Mozart lately died at Vienna of cancer in the stomach.—**HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.**—The Italian Opera House positively closed on Tuesday night, and there are to be no more "last words." This "farewell night" is genuine; Grisi, Favanti, Corelli, and Mario, left on Wednesday to charm the provincials; and Persiani, Fornasari, for another tour. Fanny Ellsler departs for Dublin, and Cerito for Liverpool, and continental engagements.—**BIRMINGHAM.**—Mr. Machin will give a grand concert in the spacious town-hall, on Friday evening, for which he has engaged the following artists:—Madame Grisi, Signora Favanti, the Misses Williams, Signori Mario, F. Lablache, and Paltoni. Conductors, Signor Schirra and Mr. Stimpson. The latter will perform on our organ, and several choral pieces will be performed.—**MANCHESTER.**—M. Leopold de Meyer, the eminent pianist, will give some *soirées* in the Exchange rooms next week, when he will perform on the euphonicon. He will be assisted by the Misses Williams and Mr. Hayward, the violinist.—**THE PERSIAN PARTY** will give two concerts at Cheltenham on Wednesday and Thursday, and at Bath the week following, where it will be joined by Mr. John Parry, who has been engaged by Mr. Macready to sing for a limited period, at the Theatre Royal, Bristol.

YORK CATHEDRAL ORGAN.

(Continued from p. 274).

About 1690 it was again placed over the stone screen, at the expense of Archbishop Lamplugh and the Earl of Strafford. In the first instance, it was not remarkable either for power or sweetness, but after several additions by York and London builders, it became, in 1821, by the fulfilment of Dean Markham's kind promises made to Dr. Camidge (when a boy, officiating as deputy organist to his father, that he should have the organ made to his own fancy as soon as the church funds would allow,) the "largest and most complete instrument in Great Britain."—Vide "the account of the grand musical festival held in September, 1823, in the cathedral church of York, (in which is given a detailed description of this organ) by John Crosse, Esq., F.S.A., F.R.S.L., M.G.S., published in 1825." When it was destroyed by the fire of 1829, it contained 52 stops, 3254 pipes, 3 rows of keys, 60 notes in compass, and 2 octaves of pedals. The largest pipe it contained was 24 feet in length. It must therefore be observed, that York has for above two centuries been "famous for its organ," and as Tommy Gent has also recorded, for its "great psalm tune;" but in later, more especially in our time, it has, through Dr. Camidge's steady and unflinching perseverance, become the birth-place of what really may be termed the "cathedral organ"—the organ, *par excellence*, as much excelling the usual church organ, as a grand pianoforte does a square one. The construction of the organ above mentioned, was the commencement of a new era of organ building in England. What was then so well begun, was destined, phoenix like, to rise to that proud pre-eminence now attained; and had it not been for this excellence in the York organ, it may be asked, where would have been the Birmingham, so much boasted of? It was, indeed, the next in succession to the York, but which, however, exceeding the Birmingham organ very greatly, not merely in the *number*, but in the *scale* also, of its stops, the York may be fairly supposed to possess double the power of the other; and this superiority, none will deny, is fully required by the situation which it occupies. The vast space of York Minster will absorb a sound, and reduce it to softness, which would almost crack the *tympanum* of the ear in the Birmingham Town Hall. The internal space of the former is more than *ten times* that of the latter. The Minster organ stands in the centre of the spacious building; the choir, the nave, the transepts, and the lantern tower, each absorbing its share of sound:

whereas the Birmingham organ is placed (as is that at Haarlem) at one end of an apartment of simple form: its whole sound is driven forward in one direction—towards the audience;—and an instrument of no very extraordinary powers ought to be sufficient for such a situation. We have it on the authority of critical hearers, that the Birmingham full organ is rather a *crash* than the poetic beauty and grandeur of musical sound;—it is, as has been well observed, like a large picture in a situation where the spectator cannot obtain a sufficiently distant view of it to give it the effect intended by the artist. The very reverse of this is the happy condition of the organ in the Cathedral of York. There, no coarseness is perceptible; the space, which gives effect to the "plump and lusty" tones of the large scale stops, subdues all harshness; and it is a fact ascertained by experience, that for this building, the great manual organ pipes cannot be *voiced* too powerfully. It was the original fault of the present organ, that, having had the operation of voicing performed in the builders' workshops, instead of in the place it was intended for, its brilliancy and distinctness were not such as they ought to have been, and such as is now produced. It is therefore worse than idle in the Birmingham people to boast of their organ being *unrivalled*; we will bye and bye show how much it *falls short* of the York organ in actual size. But, even were their instrument a *fac simile* of ours, it would not avail in a comparison; for it would still lack the building, which, in the case of our magnificent cathedral, is the better half of the organ after all. In this, old Ebor stands unrivalled among all competitors in this kingdom; even in the noble cathedrals that are dispersed through the country no equal can be found to York Minster in dimensions, general proportions, grandeur of effect to the eye, and the sublimity and mellowness which it imparts to sound. It is true, indeed, that such a building requires an instrument of vast power to fill it with sound;—but when it is filled, as with its magnificent organ, *it now is*, the effect is grand and affecting in the highest degree, and yet there are in this organ *many* solo stops of such beautifully vocal, soft, and varied qualities of tone as actually to *require* (as they fascinatingly *claim*) the closest attention of the listener. We beg to be clearly understood, that we have not the slightest intention of depreciating the real merits of the Birmingham organ, as it is confessedly a very complete and splendid instrument; but when we notice such unscrupulous violations of truth, as have been so widely disseminated, we deem it a duty incumbent upon us to set the

public right, as to the relative dimensions and powers of these two great organs, which, in the first instance, proceeded from the same workshops; and we may also inform our readers who take an interest in such matters, that the scales of the stops which the London builders persisted in asserting to be sufficiently ample for the York Minster organ (even with all the advantages of the building for musical effect), were very soon found to be greatly inferior in producing that satisfactorily rich body of sound for which the old organ was so celebrated. That instrument owed its peculiar excellencies to the judgment and taste of Dr. Camidge, and the persevering diligence of Mr. Ward, in voicing every pipe on the spot, with a view to the attainment of the greatest effect of which the situation was capable. The present organ was presented by the late Right Hon. and Rev. John Lumley Saville, Earl of Scarbro', and senior prebendary of York cathedral. Its specification was composed by Dr. Camidge, of York, the present organist, and the instrument built in London, in 1837.—(From a Pamphlet published at York.)

CORK.—(Mr. Hogan's Concert.)—The concert of this Pianist came off on Friday evening, at the Imperial Clarence Rooms, to a crowded audience, when Signor Camillo Sivori took his farewell of Cork.—Well worthy is Mr. Hogan of associating with such an artist. His accompaniments were in admirable keeping with Sivori's violin performance. But it was in his pianoforte solo we recognized Mr. Hogan's mastery of his instrument, and most particularly in his extemporaneous performance. His playing was characterized by great clearness and brilliancy of execution. He was warmly applauded. Miss Hamilton acquitted herself with admiration, and Signor Inehindi was loudly and deservedly encored in his favourite air *Largo al Facotum*.—(Southampton Reporter.)

LIVERPOOL.—(Jullien's Concerts.)—On Monday last, Mons. Jullien had the honour of giving his concerts to the most numerous and fashionable assemblage we have seen at the grounds this season. The morning concert passed off with *eclat*, the pieces being ably executed; several of them were encored. The evening performances also gave great satisfaction. The "Post Horn Gallop" met with an enthusiastic encore. Herr Koenig's performances on the common horn, corneopean, and cornet-a-piston were excellent, especially those on the first named instrument. The "English Quadrille" created much amusement.—The company, both in the morning and evening, was select and numerous, not-

withstanding the threatening state of the atmosphere in the early part of the day. Mons. Jullien took his benefit on Tuesday, when the gardens were much less thronged; this, however, may be attributed to its not being made sufficiently public. The overture to "Fra Diavolo" was played in brilliant style, as were also the Polkas and several other pieces.—*Liverpool Mail.*

Notices to Correspondents.

A SUBSCRIBER.—(Brighton)—We are greatly indebted to our Correspondent, with whose communication, we have (as he will perceive) taken some liberties. His further communications will be esteemed favours.—MR. JACKSON shall receive early attention.—A SUBSCRIBER. Dr. Mendelssohn, is of a Jewish family, but is himself of the Christian persuasion. He is a grandson of the celebrated Rabbi, Mendelssohn, whose "New Phædon," and other works, are highly esteemed by the philosophers and literati of Germany. The father of Dr. Mendelssohn was wont to make the following remark:—"When I was a young man I was distinguished as the son of the great Mendelssohn, now that I am an old man I am distinguished as the father of the great Mendelssohn." To be thus son'd and father'd is, however, no small honour.—MR. ARTHUR WALLBRIDGE; the new advertisement arrived too late to supersede the old one—and the subsequent one being mislaid caused the mistake complained of.—We have received the book and shall look it carefully through.—MR. CHARLES SMITH, received with many thanks.—MR. OLLIVIER, we thank our correspondent for his attention, but must premise that we cannot undertake to secure stamped copies, unless ordered previous to our going to press.—MR. Z. T. PURDAY, how doubly welcome such communications, were they not *pseudonymous*.—Will Z. T. P. take our hint?—MR. H. BUSSELL.—MR. H. FARMER.—DR. ELVEY.—MR. W. H. MALCOLM—are thanked for their favours.—MR. C. D. HACKETT. The songs have come to hand, and shall receive due attention. To his query we are able to answer—but all particulars can be learned of Mr. Parry, honorary secretary.—MESSRS. MARTIN, positively, to-morrow, at five, if agreeable to our correspondents.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

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